

Act IV. THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. *Scene II.*



De Wilde pins?

S. Clayton, sculp?

M^r. KING as LORD OGLEBY.

*Will not be grivous to you, to bring your
Widdlings and Coddlings.*

Dublin Published by W^m Jones N^o 86 Dame Street

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THE
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

A

COMEDY.

BY G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK, ESQRS.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS.

By Permission of the Managers.

"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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M DCC XCIV.



THE
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

OF one of the best Comedies in our language, written by two of the happiest geniuses of the time, though curiosity would wish the knowledge of their several shares in the composition, we can give nothing satisfactory as an answer.

If internal evidence point out any thing of this sort, it seems to be that the design, if not even the execution of OGLEBY, came from GARRICK. The Comedy, without it, certainly had been good, but it could not have been striking.

The praise of the Authors having been awarded, it gives the Writer pleasure to devote one page to the just fame of the Actor. The character, as performed by MR. KING, is the first comic effort of the Stage.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mr. HOLLAND.

*POETS and Painters, who from nature draw
Their best and richest stores, have made this law :
That each should neighbourly assist his brother,
And steal with decency from one another.
To-night, your matchless Hogarth gives the thought,
Which from his canvas to the stage is brought.
And who so fit to warm the poet's mind,
As he who pictur'd morals and mankind ?
But not the same their characters and scenes ;
Both labour for one end, by different means ;
Each, as it suits him, takes a separate road,
Their one great object, MARRIAGE-A-LA-MODE !
Where titles deign with cits to have and hold,
And change rich blood for more substantial gold !
And honour'd trade from interest turns aside,
To hazard happiness for titled pride.
The Painter dead, yet still he charms the eye ;
While England lives, his fame can never die :
But he, who struts his hour upon the stage,
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age ;
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save,
The art and artist share one common grave.*

PROLOGUE.

*O let me drop one tributary tear,
On poor Jack Falstaff's grave and Juliet's bier !
You to their worth must testimony give ;
'Tis in your hearts alone their fame can live.
Still as the scenes of life will shift away,
The strong impressions of their art decay.
Your children cannot feel what you have known ;
They'll boast of QUINS and CIBBERS of their own :
The greatest glory of our happy few,
Is to be felt, and be approv'd by you.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Lord OGLEBY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. King.
Sir JOHN MELVIL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
STERLING,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Quick.
LOVEWELL,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
CANTON,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. C. Powell.
BRUSH,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Bernard.
Serjeant FLOWER,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Powel.
TRAVERSE,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
TRUEMAN,	-	-	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.

Women.

Mrs. HEIDELBERG,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Webb.
Miss STERLING,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Mattocks.
FANNY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Merry.
BETTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Wells.
Chambermaid,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Rock.
TRUSTY,	-	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Platt.

THE
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Room in STERLING's House. Miss FANNY and BETTY meeting.

Betty running in.

MA'AM! Miss Fanny! ma'am!

Fanny. What's the matter! Betty!

Betty. Oh la! ma'am! as sure as I am alive,
here is your husband—

Fanny. Hush! my dear Betty! if any body in the
house should hear you, I am ruined.

Betty. Mercy on me! it has frightened me to
such a degree that my heart is come up to my
mouth.—But as I was saying, ma'am, here's that
dear, sweet—

Fanny. Have a care! Betty.

Betty. Lord! I am bewitched, I think.—But as
I was a saying, ma'am, here's Mr. Lovewell just
come from London.

Fanny. Indeed!

Betty. Yes, indeed and indeed, ma'am, he is. I
saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fanny. I am glad to hear it.—But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again, on any account. You know, we have agreed never to drop any expression of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Betty. Dear ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth, than I am. Though I say it, I am as secret as the grave—and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doom's day for Betty.

Fanny. I know you are faithful—but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Betty. Very true, ma'am! and yet I vow and protest, there's more plague than pleasure with a secret; especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fanny. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then, I hope, you may mention it to any body.—Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Betty. The sooner the better, I believe: for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fanny. Fie, Betty.

[*Blushing.*

Betty. Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms—

Fanny. Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Betty. Angry!—Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it, as much as if it was my own.—I meant no harm, Heaven knows.

Fanny. Well, say no more of this—It makes me uneasy—All I have to ask of you, is to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter, till we disclose it to the family ourselvess.

Betty. Me reveal it!—If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world—And as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother—But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening.—For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

Fanny. See there now! again. Pray be careful.

Betty. Well—well—nobody hears me.—Man and wife.—I'll say no more—what I tell you is very true for all that—

Lovewell. [Calling within.] William!

Betty. Hark! I hear your husband—

Fanny. What!

Betty. I say, here comes Mr. Lovewell—Mind the caution I give you—I'll be whipped now, if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me—as you sow, so you must reap—as you brew, so you must bake.—I'll e'en slip down the back-stairs and leave you together. [Exit.

Fanny. I see, I see I shall never have a moment's ease till our marriage is made public. New diff're-

ses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter Lovewell.

Lov. My love!—How's this?—In tears?—Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted! Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity?

Fanny. Oh, Mr. Lovewell; the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family; and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Lov. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy.—To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Every thing now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fanny. End how it will, I am resolved it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind to be mistress of the universe.

ACT I. THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE.

11

Lov. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion!—I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening—and I dare say, within this hour.

Fanny. I am sorry for it.

Lov. Why so?

Fanny. No matter—Only let us disclose our marriage immediately!

Lov. As soon as possible.

Fanny. But directly.

Lov. In a few days, you may depend on it.

Fanny. To-night—or to-morrow morning.

Lov. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fanny. Nay, but you must.

Lov. Must! Why?

Fanny. Indeed you must, I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Lov. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them—What are they?

Fanny. I cannot tell you.

Lov. Not tell me?

Fanny. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with every thing.

Lov. Sorry they are coming!—Must be discovered!—What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fanny. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures—but rest assured, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be

it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Lov. You put me upon the rack.—I would do any thing to make you easy.—But you know your father's temper.—Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence, can ever make him forego—and these he thinks his money will purchase.—You know too your aunt's, Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for every thing that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands; by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family: now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might, perhaps, be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fanny. But if they are made acquainted with it otherwise than by ourselves, it will be ten times worse: and a discovery grows every day more probable. The whole family have long suspected our affection. We are also in the power of a foolish maid-servant; and if we may even depend on her fidelity, we cannot answer for her discretion.—Discover it therefore, immediately, lest some accident should bring it to light, and involve us in additional disgrace.

Lov. Well—well—I mean to discover it soon, but would not do it too precipitately. I have more than once sounded Mr. Sterling about it, and will attempt him more seriously the next opportunity.

But my principal hopes are these.—My relationship to Lord Ogleby, and his having placed me with your father, have been, you know, the first links in the chain of this connection between the two families; in consequence of which, I am at present in high favour with all parties: while they all remain thus well affected to me, I propose to lay our case before the old lord; and if I can prevail on him to mediate in this affair, I make no doubt but he will be able to appease your father; and, being a lord and a man of quality, I am sure he may bring Mrs. Heidelberg into good humour at any time.—Let me beg you, therefore, to have but a little patience, as, you see, we are upon the very eve of a discovery, that must probably be to our advantage.

Fanny. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Lov. But in the mean time make yourself easy.

Fanny. As easy as I can, I will.—We had better not remain together any longer at present.—Think of this business, and let me know how you proceed.

Love. Depend on my care! But, pray, be cheerful.

Fanny. I will.

As she is going out, enter STERLING.

Sterl. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fanny. [Confused.] Mr. Lovewell, sir!

Sterl. And where are you going, hussy?

Fanny. To my sister's chamber, sir! [Exit.]

Sterl. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner?—Well—well—

let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Lov. Would to Heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation!

Sterl. Yourself! eh, Lovewell?

Lov. With your pleasure, sir!

Sterl. Mighty well!

Lov. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Sterl. Better and better!

Lov. And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

Sterl. What! you marry Fanny!—no—no—that will never do, Lovewell!— You're a good boy, to be sure—I have a great value for you—but cann't think of you for a son-in-law.—There's no stuff in the case; no money, Lovewell!

Lov. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendor, sufficient to keep us above distress.—Add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it—and have love, honour—

Sterl. But not the stuff, Lovewell!—Add one little round o to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me.— You know I've a regard for you—would do any thing to serve you—any thing on the footing of friendship—but—

Lov. If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured, that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Sterl. Psha! psha! that's another thing, you know.—Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Lov. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Sterl. Inclinations! why, you would not persuade me that the girl is in love with you—eh, Lovewell?

Lov. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir: but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Sterl. Why, indeed, now if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no—'twill never do—I must hear no more of this—Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Lov. [Hesitating.] I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise you.

Sterl. Why you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

Lov. Marry her, sir! [Confused.]

Sterl. Ay, marry her, sir!—I know very well that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much farther towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers or mothers, or uncles or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and

destroy the peace of my family in that manner.—I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Lov. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir.—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Sterl. Promise then, that you will carry this matter no farther without my approbation.

Lov. You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

Sterl. Well—well—that's enough—I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you.—Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense!—What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

Lov. Nothing material.

Sterl. Have you seen the currants, the soap, and Madeira safe in the warehouses? Have you compared the goods with the invoice and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Lov. They are, sir!

Sterl. And how are stocks?

Lov. Fell one and a half this morning.

Sterl. Well, well,—some good news from America, and they'll be up again.—But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvill? When are we to expect them?

Lov. Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them. [Giving letters.]

Sterl. Let me see—let me see—'Slife, how his lordship's letter is perfumed!—It takes my breath away. [Opening it.] And French paper too! with a fine border of flowers and flourishes—and a flip-

pery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. ' My dear Mr. Sterling.' [Reading.] Mercy on me ! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this ?—Eh!—' with you to night'—[Reading.]—' Lawyers to-morrow morning'—To night!—that's sudden, indeed—Where's my sister Heidelberg ? she should know of this immediately.—Here, John ! Harry ! Thomas ! [Calling the servants.] Hark ye, Lovewell !

Lov. Sir.

Sterl. Mind now, how I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John—We'll shew your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city—They shall eat gold—and drink gold—and lie in gold.—Here, cook ! butler ! [Calling.] What signifies your birth and education, and titles !—Money, money ! that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Lov. Very true, sir.

Sterl. True, sir!—Why then, have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business.—Where are these fellows ?—John ! Thomas ! [Calling.] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course.—Ah, Lovewell ! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe.—'Slife, man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob.—Where are all my rascals ? Here, William !

[Exit, calling.

Lov. So—as I suspected.—Quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with great displeasure.—What's best to be done?—Let me see!—Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices.—Poor Fanny! It hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety.—Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Changes to another apartment. Enter Miss STERLING, and Miss FANNY.

Miss Sterl. Oh, my dear sister, say no more!—This is downright hypocrisy.—You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure.—Well, after all, it is extremely natural—It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fanny. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss Sterl. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fanny. Not in the least.

Miss Sterl. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fanny. No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss Sterl. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title—But I had forgot—There's that dear sweet creature Mr. Lovewell in the cafe.—You would not break your faith with your true love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fanny. Mr. Lovewell!—always Mr. Lovewell!—Lord, what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss Sterl. Pretty peevish soul!—Oh, my dear grave, romantic sister!—a perfect philosopher in petticoats!—Love and a cottage!—Eh, Fanny—Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!—

Fanny. And why not the coach and six without the indifference?—But, pray, when is this happy marriage of yours to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss Sterl. In a day or two—I cannot tell exactly—Oh, my dear sister!—I must mortify her a little. [Aside.] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray, give me your opinion of my jewels.—How do you like the file of this esclavage? [Showing jewels.]

Fanny. Extremely handsome, indeed, and well fancied.

Miss Sterl. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds, to one, and Sir John's to the other.—And this pair of ear-rings! set transparent! here, the tops, you see, will take off to wear in a morning, or in an undress—how d'ye like them?

[Shows jewels.]

Fanny. Very much, I assure you—Bless me, sister, you have a prodigious quantity of jewels—you'll be the very queen of diamonds.

Miss Sterl. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear!—I shall be as fine as a little queen, indeed.—I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow—made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts—jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixt—the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life!—The jeweller says, I shall set out with as many diamonds as any body in town, except lady Brilliant, and Polly What d'ye call it, Lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fanny. But what are your wedding clothes, sister?

Miss Sterl. Oh, white and silver to be sure, you know.—I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutefstring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutefstring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fanny. Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking.

Miss Sterl. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knight's ladies.—Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutefstring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdasher's Hall—Whilst the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new-cut yew-hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fanny. Indeed, indeed, fister, this is too much—If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a bye-word in the city—You must never venture on the inside of Temple Bar again.

Miss Sterl. Never do I desire it—never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square—far—far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within!—my heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at Court!—gilt chariot!—pye-balled horses!—laced liveries!—and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—‘Who is that young lady! Who is she?’—‘Lady Melvil, ma’am!’—Lady Melvil! My ears tingle at the sound.—And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking—‘Any news upon ‘Change?’—to cry, Well, Sir John! any thing new from Arthur’s?—or—to say to some other woman of quality, Was your Ladyship at the Dutches of Rubber’s last night?—Did you call in at Lady Thunder’s? In the immensity of crowd I swear I did not see you—scarce a soul at the opera last Saturday—shall I see you at Carlisle House next Thursday!—Oh, the dear Beau Monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fanny. And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me—no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss Sterl. [Affectedly.] You?—You’re above pity.—You would not change conditions with me.—You’re over head and ears in love, you know.—

Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say.—He will mind his business—you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family—and once in a season perhaps you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know—and perhaps I may meet you in the summer with some other citizens at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations.—You 'sha'nt want my countenance, I assure you.

Fanny. Oh, you're too kind, fister !

Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG.

Mrs. Heidel. [At entering.] Here this evening !—I vow and perferst we shall scarce have time to provide for them—Oh, my dear ! [to *Miss Sterl.*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvill will be here to-night.

Miss. Sterl. To-night, ma'am ?

Mrs. Heidel. Yes, my dear, to-night.—Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles !—Lord, I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring.—Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper ? [Enter *Mrs. Trusty.*] Oh, here, Trusty ! do you know that people of qualaty are expected here this evening ?

Trusty. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well—Do you be sure now that every thing is done in the most genteelst manner—and to the honour of the famaly.

Trusly. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well—but mind what I say to you.

Trusly. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber—d'ye hear?—and Sir John in the blue damask room—his lordship's valet-de-shamb in the opposite—

Trusly. But Mr. Lovewell is come down—and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well—well—Mr. Lovewell may make shift—or get a bed at the George.—But hark ye, *Trusly*!

Trusly. Ma'am!

Mrs. Heidel. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the civers off the couch and the chairs, and put the china figures on the mantle piece immediately.

Trusly. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Be gone then! fly, this instant!—Where's my brother Sterling?

Trusly. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Very well. [Exit *Trusly*.] Miss Fanny! I pertest I did not see you before—Lord, child, what's the matter with you?

Fanny. With me! Nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Bless me! Why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I pertest.—And then you have dreft yourself as loose and as big—I declare there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist—You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child!—You know the qualaty

will be here by and by.—Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [Exit Fanny.] She is gone away in tears—absolutely crying, I vow and pertest.—This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss Sterl. Poor soul! she can't help it.

[Affectedly.]

Mrs. Heidel. Well, my dear! Now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss Sterl. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But, indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family! I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. Heidel. Oh fie, my dear! I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister! What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address, an exact picture of the manners of quality.

Miss Sterl. Oh, he is the very mirror of complaisance! full of formal bows and set speeches!—I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. Heidel. I say jealous indeed—Jealous of who, pray?

Miss Sterl. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am, and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. Heidel. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the wulgar part of the famaly?—Between you and your sister, for instance—or me and my brother? —Be advised by me, child! It is all puliteness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the qualaty better than I do.

Miss Sterl. In my mind the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweet-heart.

Enter STERLING.

Sterl. [At entering.] No fish?—Why the pond was dragged but yeslerday morning—There's carp and tench in the boat.—Pox on't, if that dog Lovewell had any thought, he wou'd have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackrell.

Mrs. Heidel. Lord, brother, I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Sterl. I warrant you.—But, pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dreft to-morrow, and some venison—and let the gardener cut some pine-apples—and get out some ice.—I'll answer for wine, I warrant you—I'll give them such a glas of Champagne as they never drank in their lives—no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. Heidel. Pray now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of qualaty. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff; and that will keep you awake—And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous vulgar.

Sterl. Never fear, fister!—Who have we here?

Mrs. Heidel. It is Mons. Catoon, the Swish gentleman, that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter CANTON.

Sterl. Ah, mounseer! your servant.—I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling.—Ma'am, I am yours—Matemoiselle, I am yours.

[Bowing round.]

Mrs. Heidel. Your humble servant, Mr. Catoon!

Can. I kiss your hands, matam!

Sterl. Well, mounseer!—and what news of your good family!—when are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Can. Mons. Sterling! Milor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melville will be here in one quarter-hour.

Sterl. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. Heidel. O, I am prodigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afeard of some accident.—Will you please to have any thing, Mr. Catoon, after your journey?

Can. No, I tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Shall I go and shew you the apartments, sir?

Can. You do me great honeur, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Come then!—come, my dear!

[*To Miss Sterling.* *Exeunt.*

Sterl. Pox on't, it's almost dark—It will be too late to go round the garden this evening.—However, I will carry them to take a peep at my fine canal at least, I am determined.

ACT II. SCENE I.

An anti-chamber to Lord OGLEBY's Bed-chamber.

Table with Chocolate, and small Case for Medicines.

Enter BRUSH, my Lord's Valet-de-chambre, and STERLING's Chambermaid.

Brush.

You shall stay, my dear, I infist upon it.

Cham. Nay, pray, sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drink chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one—if my lord should wake, or the Swish gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frighted to death—besides, I have had my tea already this morning—I'm sure I hear my lord.

[*In a fright.*

Brusß. No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself—the moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience,

Cham. But should he come upon us without ringing—

Brusß. I'll forgive him if he does—This key [*Takes a phial out of the case.*] locks him up till I please to let him out.

Cham. Law! Sir, that's potecary's stuff.

Brusß. It is so—but without this he can no more get out of bed—than he can read without spectacles—[*Sips.*] What with qualms, age, rheumatisms, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a-going for the day.

Cham. [*Sips.*] That's prodigious indeed—[*Sips.*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brusß. Yes, he's quite a spectacle, [*Sips.*] a mere corpse, till he is reviv'd and refresh'd from our little magazine here—When the restorative pills, and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. [*Sips.*] Poor gentleman! But should the Swish gentleman come upon us. [Frightened.]

Brusß. Why then the English gentleman would be very angry.—No foreigner must break in upon my privacy. [*Sips.*] But I can assure you Monsieur Canton is otherwise employed—He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast—ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably—My lord's chocolate is re-

markably good, he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [Sipping.] 'Tis very fine indeed! [Sips.] and charmingly perfum'd—it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking. [Takes them out of a drawer in the table.] and, in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [Kisses her.]—A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. [He bows, she curtseys.] —Your young ladies are fine girls, faith: [Sips.] though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclin'd to matrimony, I should take the youngest.

[Sips.]

Cham. Miss Fanny's the most affablest, and the most best natur'd creter! —

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so—

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself—but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know.

[Sips.]

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us—we don't consider tempers—we want money. Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal in other particulars, ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody!—[Bell rings.] —Oh, 'tis my lord! —Well, your servant, Mr Brush—I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so—but never mind the bell—I sha'n't go this half hour.—Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush—I'll be here to set all things to rights—But I must not drink tea indeed—and so your servant.

[Exit with tea-board. Bell rings again.

Brush. It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the Abigails:—this is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her.—[Bell rings.]—And now I'll go to my lord, for I have nothing else to do.

[Going.

Enter CANTON, with Newspapers in his Hand.

Can. Monfieur Brush!—Maistre Brush—my lor stirra yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell—I am going to him.

[Exit.

Can. Depechez vous done. [Puts on his spectacles.]—I wish de deveil had all dese papiers—I forget as fast as I read—de Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre—I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi.—Voyons! [Reads the paper.] Here is nothing but Anti-sejanus & advertise—

Enter Maid with Chocolate things.

Vat you want, child?—

Maid. Only the chocolate things, sir.

Can. O, ver well—dat is good girl—and very prit too. [Exit maid.]

Lord Og. [Within.] Canton! he, he!—[Coughs.] —Canton!—

Can. I come, my lor!—vat shall I do?—I have no news—he will make great tintamarre!—

Lord Og. [Within.] Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter Lord Ogleby, leaning on Brush.

Can. Here, my lor;—I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.—

Lord Og. Damn your pardon, and your papiers—I want you here, Canton.

Can. Den I run, dat is all. [Shuffles along. *Lord Ogleby leans upon Canton too, and comes forward.*]]

Lord Og. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture—you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor—I can't help—

Lord Og. [Cries out.] O Diavolo!

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor.

Lord Og. Indeed but I am, my lor.—That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew, and the east wind, my hips and shoulders ars absolutely screw'd to my body.

Can. A littel veritable eau d'arquibusade vil set all to right again.—

[*Lord Og. sits down, and Brush gives chocolate.*

Lord Og. Where are the palfy drops, Brush?

Brush. Here, my lord! [Pouring out.]

Lord Og. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton.

Can. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord Og. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

Can. Yes, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about nothing at all. La voila! [Puts on his spectacles.]

Lord Og. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor.—[*Can. reads.*] ‘Dere is no question, but that the Cosmetique Royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimpes, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de wrinque of old age, &c. &c.’—A great deal more, my lor.—‘Be sure to ask for de Cosmetique Royale, signed by the Doc-teur own hand—Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink.’—Eh bien, my lor!

Lord Og. Eh bien, Canton!—Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord Og. For me, you old puppy! for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord Og. Do I want cosmeticks?

Can. My lor!

Lord Og. Look in my face—come, be sincere.—Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. [With his spectacles.] En verité non—’Tis very smoose and brillian—but tote dat you might take a little by way of prevention.

Lord Og. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do.—The surfeit water, Brush! [Brush *pours out.*]—What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with? —Eh!

Brush. Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord Og. You are right, Brush—There is no washing the blackmoor white—Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars—always taste of the Borachio—and the poor woman his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation!—I think the daughters are tolerable—Where's my cephalic snuff? [Brush gives him a box.]

Can. Dey tink so of you, my lor, for dey look at no ting else, ma foi.

Lord Og. Did they? Why, I think they did a little—Where's my glass? [Brush puts one on the table.] The youngest is delectable. [Takes snuff.]

Can. O oui, my lor, vey delect, inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

Lord Og. She was particular.—The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt, happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother.—Some peppermint water, Brush.—How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook every thing in a marriage contract but their fortune.

Can. C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord Og. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my bed side.—[Brush goes for it.] Canton, do you wait in the anti-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Much good may do your lordship.

Lord Og. [To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [Exit Brush.]—What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [Gets off his chair.] He! courage, my lor! by Heavens, I'm another creature. [Hums and dances a little.] It will do, faith.—Bravo, my lor! these girls have absolutely inspired me—If they are for a game of romps—Me voila pret! [Sings and dances.]—Oh!—that's an ugly twinge—but its gone.—I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. [Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he's painting himself, a knocking at the door.] Who's there? I won't be disturb'd.

Can. [Without.] My lor! my lor! here is Monsieur Sterling to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord Og. [Softly.] What a fellow!—[Aloud.] I am extremely honour'd by Mr. Sterling.—Why don't you see him in, monsieur!—I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [Door opens.] Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL.

Ster. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well in the night—I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have—I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them.—His majesty, God bless him, don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord Og. Your beds are like every thing else about you—incomparable!—They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden. You must see my water by daylight, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flow'ring trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips.—Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe—but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about—I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord Og. I pray Heaven you may! [Aside.]

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord Og. I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world, he, he, he!

Can. Bravissimo, my lor! ha, ha, he!

Sterl. They shall meet your lordship in the garden—we don't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner, and in the evening you shall go the grand tour as I call it, ha, ha, ha!

Lord Og. Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend—you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness, he, he, he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en vérité!

[*Laughing very heartily.*

Sterl. If my young man [*To Lov.*] here would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at yours, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord Og. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord Og. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Well, sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been fighing and serenading this morning?

Sir John. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord Og. I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir—What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! they make love with faces, as if they were burying the dead—though, indeed, a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living —eh, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord—Ha, ha, ha!

Can. Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir John. [Apart.] Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly.

Lov. [Apart.] We'll go together.—If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[*Exeunt Sir John and Lovewell.*]

Sterl. My girls are always ready, I make them rise soon and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions, and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord Og. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Sterl. Fine things, indeed, my lord!—Ah, my lord, had not you run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord Og. Very pleasant, he, he, he.—

[*Half laughing.*]

Sterl. Here's mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out—eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord Og. Very pleasant, I protest—What a vulgar dog!

[*Afide.*]

Can. My lor so old as me!—He is chicken to me—and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Sterl. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer—keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world—Ha, ha, ha!—But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden: we have but a little time to breakfast—I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a lit-

tle walk with you, my lord, and then for the hot rolls and butter!

[Exit.]

Lord Og. I shall attend you with pleasure—
Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it—What a strange beast it is!

Can. C'est un barbare.

Lord Og. He is a vulgar dog, and if there was not so much money in the family, which I cann't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly—Come along, monsieur!

[*Exeunt Lord Ogleby and Canton.*

SCENE II.

Changes to the Garden. Enter *Sir JOHN MELVIL,*
and LOVEWELL.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir John. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Lov. On what occasion?

Sir John. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you, that I could not sleep in my bed—but I found that you could not sleep neither—The bird was flown, and the nest long sence cold.—Where was you, Lovewell?

Lov. Pooh! pr'ythee! ridiculous!

Sir John. Come now, which was it? Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too—or—

Lov. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir John. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Lov. Walking—writing—what signifies where I was?

Sir John. Walking, yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet refreshing showers to walk in! No, no, Lovewell.—Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Lov. But your business! your business, Sir John!

Sir John. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Lov. Psha!

Sir John. Poor Lovewell, he can't bear it, I see. She charged you not to kiss and tell.—Eh, Lovewell! However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine.—What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Lov. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir John. Ay; what d'ye think of her?

Lov. An odd question!—but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir John. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Lov. How?

Sir John. But her person—what d'ye think of that?

Lov. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir John. A little grisette thing.

Lov. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir John. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances. [Seeing

Lord Ogleby, &c.] We are interrupted—When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter Lord OGLEBY, STERLING, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, Miss STERLING, and FANNY.

Lord Og. Great improvements, indeed, Mr. Sterling! wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bafon with Neptune in the middle, are all in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park Corner.

Sterl. The chief pleasure of a country-house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expence, not I.—This is quite another gues sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun—smack-smooth—as you see.—Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brewhouse into a pinery.—The high octagon summer house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East-India captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle, and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord Og. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling! for it looks like a cabin in the air.—If flying chairs were in use, the captain

might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha !

Mrs. Heidel. My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord!—But you'll excuse him.—I have a little Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste.—In the evening I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a fullabub warm from the cow.

Lord Og. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg—the very flower of delicacy, and cream of politeness.

Mrs. Heidel. O, my lord ! [Leering at *Lord Og.*]

Lord Og. O, madam ! [Leering at *Mrs. Heidel.*]

Sterl. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord ?

Lord Og. A most excellent serpentine ! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true lover's knot.

Sterl. Ay, here's none of your straight lines here—but all taste—zig-zag—crinkum-crankum—in and out—right and left—to and again—twisting and turning like a worm, my lord !

Lord Og. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling ! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose any where in these walks.—You are a most excellent œconomist of your land, and make a little go a great way.—It lies together in as small parcels as if it was placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha !

Lord Og. What d'ye laugh at, Canton ?

Can. Ah! que cette similitude est drôle! So clever what you say, mi lor!

Lord Og. [To Fanny.] You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about?

Fanny. Only making up a nosegay, my lord!—Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it? [Presenting it.]

Lord Og. I'll wear it next my heart, madam!—I see the young creature dotes on me! [Apart.]

Mrs. Sterl. Lord, fitter! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook or the nurse carry to town, on a Monday morning, for a beau-pot.—Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweet-briar?

Lord Og. The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy.—A little jealous, poor soul! [Apart.]

Sterl. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. Heidel. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over-walking, brother!

Lord Og. Not at all, madam! We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty.

[Leering at the woman.]

Mrs. Heidel. Quite the man of quality, I perceive. [Apart.]

Can. Take a my arm, my lor!

[*Lord Ogleby leans on him.*]

Sterl. I'll only shew his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord Og. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Ay, ruins, my lord! and they are reckoned very fine ones too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord Og. [Going, stops.] What steeple's that we see yonder?—the parish church, I suppose.

Sterl. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord Og. Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me. [Leering at the woman.]—Simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive.—Get away, Canton! [Pushing away Canton.] I want no assistance—I'll walk with the ladies.

Sterl. This way, my lord!

Lord Og. Lead on, sir!—We young folks here, will follow you.—Madam!—Miss Sterling!—Miss Fanny! I attend you.

[Exit after Sterling, gallanting the ladies.

Can. [Following.] He is cock o'de game, ma foi!

[Exit.

Sir John. At length, thank Heaven, I have an opportunity to unbosom.—I know you are faithful,

44 THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE. ACT II.

Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Lov. Be assured you may depend upon me.

Sir John. You must know, then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Lov. How!

Sir John. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Lov. No match?

Sir John. No.

Lov. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir John. I.

Lov. You! wherefore?

Sir John. I don't like her.

Lov. Very plain, indeed! I never supposed that you was extremely devoted to her from inclination, but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience, rather than affection.

Sir John. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind—with an unimpassioned indifference ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious, sober love, as a chimæra, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries.—In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Lov. Another! So, so! here will be fine work.
And pray, who is she?

Sir John. Who is she! who can she be? but Fanny, the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny.

Lov. Fanny! What Fanny?

Sir John. Fanny Sterling. Her sister—Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Lov. Her sister? Confusion!—You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir John. Not think of it? I can think of nothing else. Nay tell me, Lovewell! was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her?—You seem confounded—Why don't you answser me?

Lov. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern.

Sir John. Why so?—Is she not an angel, Lovewell?

Lov. I foresee that it must produce the worst consequences. Consider the confusion it must unavoidably create. Let me persuade you to drop these thoughts in time.

Sir John. Never—never, Lovewell!

Lov. You have gone too far to recede. A negotiation, so nearly concluded, cannot be broken off with any grace. The lawyers, you know, are hourly expected; the preliminaries almost finally settled between Lord Ogleby and Mr. Sterling; and Miss Sterling herself ready to receive you as a husband.

Sir John. Why the banns have been published, and nobody has forbidden them, 'tis true. But you know either of the parties may change their minds even after they enter the church.

Lov. You think too lightly of this matter. To carry your addresses so far—and then to desert her—and for her sister too!—It will be such an affront to the family, that they can never put up with it.

Sir John. I don't think so: for as to my transferring my passion from her to her sister, so much the better! for then you know, I don't carry my affection out of the family.

Lov. Nay, but pr'ythee be serious, and think better of it.

Sir John. I have thought better of it already, you see. Tell me honestly, Lovewell? Can you blame me? Is there any comparison between them?

Lov. As to that now—why that—is just—just as it may strike different people. There are many admirers of Miss Sterling's vivacity.

Sir John. Vivacity! a medley of Cheapside pertness, and Whitechapel pride.—No—no, if I do go so far into the city for a wedding dinner, it shall be upon turtle at least.

Lov. But I see no probability of success; for granting that Mr. Sterling would have consented to it at first, he cannot listen to it now. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir John. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet, I think I know Mr. Sterling so well, that, strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Lov. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir John. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Lov. You'll find I am in the right.

Sir John. I have some little reason to think otherwife.

Lov. You have not declared your passion to her already.

Sir John. Yes, I have.

Lov. Indeed!—And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir John. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement?

Lov. Encouragement! did she give you any encouragement?

Sir John. I don't know what you call encouragement—but she blushed—and cried—and desired me not to think of it any more:—upon which I prest her hand—kissed it—swore she was an angel—and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Lov. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir John. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised—and she got away from me too, before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Lov. I!—a letter!—I had rather have nothing—

Sir John. Nay, you promised me your assistance—and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion.—You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Lov. As to that, I—your commands, you know—that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir John. Well—well—that's my concern—Ha ! there she goes, by heaven ! along that walk yonder, d'ye see ! I'll go to her immediately.

Lov. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir John. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Lov. Nay, pray don't go ! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits.—The shock will be too much for her. [Detaining him.]

Sir John. Nothing shall prevent me.—Ha ! now she turns into another walk—Let me go ! [Breaks from him.] I shall lose her. [Going, turns back.] Be sure now to keep out of the way ! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. [Exit hastily.]

Lov. 'Sdeath ! I can't bear this. In love with my wife ! acquaint me with his passion for her ! make his addresses before my face !—I shall break out before my time.—This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him—I am sure she could not.—Ha ! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place ?—Leave him to solicit my wife ! I

cann't submit to it.—They come nearer and nearer
—If I stay, it will look suspicious—It may be-
tray us, and incense him—They are here—I
must go—I am the most unfortunate fellow in the
world.

[Exit.]

Enter FANNY and Sir JOHN.

Fanny. Leave me, Sir John, I beseech you leave
me! nay, why will you persist to follow me with
idle solicitations, which are an affront to my cha-
racter, and an injury to your own honour.

Sir John. I know your delicacy, and tremble to
offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my
excuse! Consider, madam, that the future happi-
ness of my life depends on my present application
to you! consider that this day must determine my
fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left
me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to in-
treat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to
open to your father.

Fanny. For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think
of your previous engagements! Think of your own
situation, and think of mine! What have you dis-
covered in my conduct that might encourage you to
so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should
venture to say so much, and blush that I should
even dare to give it a hearing.—Let me begone!

Sir John. Nay, stay, madam, but one moment
—Your sensibility is too great.—Engage-
ments! what engagements have been pretended on
either side more than those of family convenience?
I went on in the trammels of matrimonial negotia-

tion with a blind submiffion to your father and Lord Ogleby ; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in yours.

Fanny. Have a care, Sir John ! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of yours despise them for it.

Sir John. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix—But when it is once inviolably attached—inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection.—When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fanny. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit; nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment of your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you, in honour to my sister: and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her.

[*Going.*]

Sir John. One word, and I have done. [*Stopping her.*] Your impatience and anxiety, and the urgency of the occasion, oblige me to be brief and explicit with you.—I appeal therefore from your delicacy to your justice.—Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclin-

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ed to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united.—Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you—and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling:—If then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me—if there is no other happier man—

Fanny. Hear me, sir, hear my final determination.—Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them;—were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other, I could not listen to your proposals.—What! you on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace; the peace of a whole family; and that of my own too!—Away, away, Sir John!—At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror.

—Nay, you must detain me no longer—I will go.

Sir John. Do not leave me in absolute despair!—Give me a glimpse of hope!

[*Falling on his knees.*]

Fanny. I cannot.—Pray, Sir John!

[*Struggling to go.*]

Sir John. Shall this hand be given to another?
[*Kissing her hand.*] No, I cannot endure it.—My

whole soul is yours, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Enter Miss Sterling.

Fanny. Ha ! my sister is here. Rise, for shame, Sir John.

Sir John. Miss Sterling ! [Rising.]

Miss Sterl. I beg pardon, sir ;—You'll excuse me, madam ! I have broke in upon you a little unopportunely, I believe—but I did not mean to interrupt you—I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotions.

Sir John. I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but—

Miss Sterl. O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology---The thing explains itself.

Sir John. It will soon, madam.—In the mean time, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions.—And—and—your humble servant, madam ! [Exit in confusion.]

Miss Sterl. Respect !—Insolence !—Esteem !—Very fine, truly !—And you, madam ! my sweet delicate, innocent, sentimental sister ! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions ?

Fanny. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister ! Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be

more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss Sterl. Make me miserable ! You are mightily deceived, madam ; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you.—A base fellow !—As for you, miss ! the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be fly, and envious, and deceitful.

Fanny. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss Sterl. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure !—Did not I find him on his knees before you ? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand ? Did not I hear his protestations ? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty ?—No, no, my dear ! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fanny. Sir John, I own, is to blame ; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss Sterl. We shall try that, madam.—I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you.

[*Exit.*]

Fanny. How unhappy I am ! my distresses multiply upon me.—Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgression, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcileably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace.—Yet, on all events, I am de-

terminated on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary.

[Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Hall. Enter a Servant leading in Serjeant FLOWER, and Counsellors TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, all booted.

Servant.

THIS way, if you please, gentlemen! my master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Serjeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, sir.

[Going.]

Flow. And hark'e, young man, [Servant returns.] desire my servant—Mr. Serjeant Flower's servant, to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall with my portmanteau.

Serv. I will, sir.

[Exit.]

Flow. Well, gentlemen! the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just

on the eve of the circuits.—Let me see—the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations.—Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Trav. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick too. But my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there the next morning. Besides, I have about half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I will take the evening before me, and then *current calamo*, as I say—eh, Traverse!

Trav. True, Mr. Serjeant; and the easiest thing in the world too; for those country attorneys are such ignorant dogs, that in case of the devise of an estate to A, and his heirs for ever, they'll make a query whether he takes in fee or in tail.

Flow. Do you expect to have much to do on the Home Circuit these assizes?

Trav. Not much *nisi prius* business, but a good deal on the crown side, I believe. The gaols are brim-full, and some of the felons in good circumstances, and likely to be tolerable clients. Let me see! I am engaged for three highway robberies, two murders, one forgery, and half a dozen larcenies, at Kingston.

Flow. A pretty decent gaol delivery!—Do you expect to bring off Darkin, for the robbery on Putney-Common? Can you make out your alibi?

Trav. Oh! no! the crown witnesses are sure to prove our identity. We shall certainly be hanged: but that don't signify.—But, Mr. Serjeant, have you much to do?—Any remarkable cause on the Midland this circuit?

Flow. Nothing very remarkable—except two rapes, and Rider and Western at Nottingham, for crim. con.—but, on the whole, I believe a good deal of business.—Our associate tells me, there are above thirty *venires* for Warwick.

Trav. Pray, Mr. Serjeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas at Lincoln?

Flow. I am—for the plaintiff.

Trav. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Trav. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no matter of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us—we have but one chance.

Trav. What's that?

Flow. Why, my Lord Chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. Ay, that may do indeed, if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendants counsel.

Flow. True.—Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

[*To True.*

True. I am, sir—I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire—go the Western circuit—and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha!—and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha!—I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before.—I wish you success, young gentleman!

Enter STERLING.

Sterl. Oh, Mr. Serjeant Flower, I am glad to see you—Your servant, Mr. Serjeant! gentlemen, your servant!—Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's Inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold tight and strong?—Eh, Master Serjeant!

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir—But then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do.—My clerk has brought the writing and all other instruments along with him, and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth!

Sterl. But that damn'd mortgage of 60,000.—There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

Trav. I can answer for that, sir—and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's proportion.—You agree, on your part, to come down with 80,000.

Sterl. Down on the nail.—Ay, ay, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases—he shall have it in India-bonds, or notes, or how he chooses.—

Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town flick at payments sometimes —debts unpaid, no credit lost with them—but no fear of us substantial fellows—Eh, Mr. Serjeant!

Flow. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine, and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of 2000. per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Trav. Very true—and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate as lies in the manors of Hogglemore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Sterl. Ah, Sir John! Here we are—hard at it —paving the road to matrimony—First the lawyers, then comes the doctor—Let us but dispatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir John. I am sorry to interrupt you, sir—but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me.—Having something very particular for

your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately.

Sterl. Ay, with all my heart!—Gentlemen, Mr. Serjeant, you'll excuse it—Business must be done, you know. The writings will be kept cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Sterl. Nay, nay, I sha'n't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you.—My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses.—Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? Or will you amuse yourselves on the green, with a game of bowls and a cool tankard?—My servants shall attend you—Do you choose any other refreshment?—Call for what you please; do as you please;—make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you.—Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—[Follows the lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir John.] And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, sir John?

Sir John. After having carried the negociation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Sterl. Uneasiness! what uneasiness?—Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir John. Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Sterl. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir John. In one word then—it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Sterl. How, Sir John! Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What? refuse to—

Sir John. Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront, nor forsake your family. My only fear is, that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Sterl. Why, did not you tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir John. True.—But you have another daughter, sir—

Sterl. Well !

Sir John. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it, and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Sterl. Mighty fine, truly ! Why, what the plague do you make of us, sir John ? Do you come to market for my daughter, like servants at a flatute-fair ? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the Grand Signior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases ? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them ; and—

Sir John. A moment's patience, sir ! Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family ; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Sterl. Compensation ! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John ?

Sir John. Come, come, Mr. Sterling ; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man

of the world. I'll deal frankly with you ! and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Sterl. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John ?

Sir John. I'll tell you, sir.—You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Sterl. Well !

Sir John. Now if you will but consent to my waving that marriage—

Sterl. I agree to your waving that marriage ! Impossible, Sir John !

Sir John. I hope not, sir; as on my part I will agree to wave my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Sterl. Thirty thousand, d'ye say ?

Sir John. Yes, sir ; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Sterl. Fifty thousand—

[*Pausing.*]

Sir John. Instead of fourscore.

Sterl. Why—why—there may be something in that.—Let me see—Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore.—But how can this be, sir John ? For you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby ; who, I believe, between you and me, Sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present ; and three-score thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present incumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir John. That objection is easily obviated.—Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own.—Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately: and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

Sterl. Why—to do you justice, sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family—

Sir John. Nothing was ever farther from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling.—And after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary—such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Sterl. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir John. The very thing!

Sterl. Odso! I had quite forgot.—We are reckoning without our host here.—There is another difficulty—

Sir John. You alarm me. What can that be?

Sterl. I cann't stir a step in this business without consulting my fister Heidelberg.—The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir John. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent—

Sterl. I don't know that—Betsy is her darling, and I cann't tell how far she may resent any flight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first, and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir John. I'll fly to her immediately ; you promise me your assistance ?

Sterl. I do.

Sir John. Ten thousand thanks for it ! and now success attend me !

[Going.]

Sterl. Hark'e, Sir John ! [Sir John returns.] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my fister, Sir John.

Sir John. Oh, I am dumb, I am dumb, sir.

[Going.]

Sterl. You'll remember it is thirty thousand.

Sir John. To be sure I do.

Sterl. But, sir John !—one thing more. [Sir John returns.] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir John. Not for the world. Let me alone ! let me alone !

[Offering to go.]

Sterl. [Holding him.] And when every thing is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir John. To be sure. A bond by all means! a bond or whatever you please. [Exit hastily.]

Sterl. I should have thought of more conditions—he's in a humour to give me every thing—Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality; that cry for a plaything one minute, and throw it by the next! as changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it was a china orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his *terra firma*; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will,—let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family.—Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens, who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion, who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

Changes to another Apartment. Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG, and Miss STERLING.

Miss Sterl. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny for you!

Mrs. Heidel. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss Sterl. O ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. Heidel. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss Sterl. And then she's so mighty good to servants—' pray, John, do this,—pray, Tom, do that —thank you, Jenny : ' and then so humble to her relations—' to be sure, papa! —as my aunt pleases —my sister knows best.' —But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. Heidel. She Lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece! I'll ladyship her indeed: a little creppin, cantin—She sha'n't be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this

intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss Sterl. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealing into corners to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but, behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. Heidel. My spirit to a T.—My dear child! [Kisses her.]—Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of Parliament, because I would not demean myself to be flobbered about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and greasy butchers and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help differing a little in opinion from you in this matter. My experunce and sagacity makes me still suspect, that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too: But Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another guess-sort of a figur; and were as perfect a pictur of two distrest lovers, as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter of fact.

Miss Sterl. Matter of fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John

kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter of fact? and did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister—Oh, that some other person, an earl, or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. Heidel. Be cool, child! you shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammaly.

Miss Sterl. As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I cann't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [Disordered.]

Mrs. Heidel. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child; I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by and by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

Miss Sterl. Pray do, madam.—[Looking back.]
—A vile wretch! [Exit in a rage.]

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Sir John. Your most obedient humble servant, madam. [Bowing very respectfully.]

Mrs. Heidel. Your servant, Sir John.

[Dropping a half curtsey, and pouting.]

Sir John. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of

your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what past this morning.

Mrs. Heidel. I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with any thing that should induce me to change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality. [Pouting.]

Sir John. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh all circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. Heidel. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John.—And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John. [Warmly.]

Sir John. I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements, which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. I disclaim her as a niece, sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister, and the whole fammaly must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir John. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Here hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself, and Mr. Sterling.

Enter STERLING behind.

And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. Indeed!

Sir John. Quite certain, madam.

Sterl. [Behind.] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

Mrs. Heidel. To marry Fanny?

[Sterling advances by degrees.]

Sir John. Yes, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir John. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. [Sees Sterling.]—Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. Heidel. What! have you consented to give up your own daughter in this manner, brother?

Sterl. Give her up! no, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds, I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John. [Apart to Sir John.]

Mrs. Heidel. Yes, yes. I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plottin and caballin against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir John. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. Heidel. No, I warrant you. I thought so.—And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted 'till the last.

Sterl. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, sir John.

Sir John. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. Heidel. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experunce in the two fammalies, are to know nothing of the matter, 'till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosaty than to countenance such a perceding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your quality, Sir John.—And as for you, brother—

Sterl. Nay, nay, but hear me, fister.

Mrs. Heidel. I am perfectly ashamed of you.—Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our fammaly than to consent—

Sterl. Consent! I consent! as I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent.—Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir John. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Sterl. Ay, I grant you, if my fister approved—But that's quite another thing, you know—

[*To Mrs. Heidel.*

Mrs. Heidel. Your fister approve, indeed!—I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling!—What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the

younger?—I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Sterl. I tell you, I never did listen to it.—Did not I say, that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John?—And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. Heidel. I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable!—The man is absolutely out of his senses.—Cann't that wife head of yours foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune?—No!—After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest?—No!—Does not this overturn the whole sytum of the fammaly?—Yes, yes, yes!—You know I was always for my niece Betsey's marrying a person of the very first qualaty. That was my maxum:—and, therefore, much the largest settlement was, of course, to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common-council-man for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir John. But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs. Heidel. What, at the expence of her elder sister! O fie, Sir John! How could you bear to hear such an indignaty, brother Sterling?

Sterl. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you.—I cann't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. Heidel. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling.—You know you have; and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Sterl. Did I, Sir John?—Nay, speak!—Bring me off, or we are ruined. [Apart to Sir John.

Sir John. Why, to be sure to speak the truth—

Mrs. Heidel. To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if every thing is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years.—I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderspracken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own fammaly shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you.

[Exit.

Sterl. I thought so. I knew she never would agree to it.

Sir John. 'Sdeath how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Nothing.

Sir John. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Sterl. It cann't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself that she threatens to leave us,—My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man;

and died worth a plumb at least ; a plumb ! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plumb and a half.

Sir John. Well ; but if I—

Sterl. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three per cents, and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir John. I can only say, sir—

Sterl. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir John. Nay, but I am even willing to—

Sterl. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand ; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir John. But is there no way, do you think, of prevailing on Mrs. Heidelberg to grant her consent ?

Sterl. I am afraid not.—However, when her passion is a little abated—for she's very passionate—you may try what can be done : but you must not use my name any more, Sir John.

Sir John. Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her ?

Sterl. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir John. I'll apply to him this very day.—And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John. [Exit.]

Sir John. What a situation am I in!—Breaking off with her whom I was bound by treaty to marry; rejected by the object of my affections; and embroiled with this turbulent woman, who governs the whole family.—And yet opposition, instead of smothering, increases my inclination. I must have her. I'll apply immediately to Lord Ogleby; and if he can but bring over the aunt to our party, her influence will overcome the scruples and delicacy of my dear Fanny, and I shall be the happiest of mankind. [Exit.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Room. Enter *Mr. STERLING, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, and Miss STERLING.*

Sterling.

WHAT! will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. Heidel. To-morrow morning. I've given orders about it already.

Sterl. Indeed!

Mrs. Heidel. Positively.

Sterl. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. Heidel. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother.—This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Sterl. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsey.

Miss Sterl. No, indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not.—For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say any thing to hurt her with you or my aunt for the world.

Mrs. Heidel. Hold your tongue, Betsey; I will have my way.—When she is packed off, every thing will go on as it should do.—Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the purliminary step to all the rest of my perceedings.

Sterl. Well, but sister—

Mrs. Heidel. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will.—Come along, child. [*To Miss Sterling.*]—The post-shay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why, I will—and so there's an end of the matter. [*Bounces out with Miss Sterling; then returns.*] One word more, brother Sterling.—I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby, of Sir John Melvil's behaviour.—Do this, brother;—shew a proper regard for the honour of your family yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the

raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind. So act as you please, and take the consequences.

[Exit.]

Sterl. The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us.—As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—‘ I will do this,’ and ‘ you shall do that,’ and ‘ you shall do t’other,—or else the fammaly sha’n’t have a farden of’—[Mimicking.]—So absolute with her money!—But, to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e’en make the best of her.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

Changes to the Garden. Enter Lord OGLEBY, and CANTON.

Lord Og. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away!—Why?—Wherefore?—What’s the meaning of all this?

Can. Je ne fais pas—I know nothing of it.

Lord Og. It cann’t be—it sha’n’t be:—I protest against the measure. She’s a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us.—Her vulgar father, that’s the very abstract of ‘Change-alley’—the aunt, that’s always endeavouring to be a fine lady—and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without

her, would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: Isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympathie entre vous, and dat young lady, mi lor.

Lord Og. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals, your Sterlings, your Heidelberg, and Devilbergs—if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—ha, ha, ha!

Lord Og. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Cant. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires!—My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects—I fly as naturally to a fine girl—

Can. As de fine girl to you, my lor, ha, ha, ha! you alway fly togedre like un pair de pigeons—

Lord Og. Like un pair de pigeons—[Mocks him.] —Vous etes un fol, Mons. Canton—Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never feest me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, my lor, he, he, he!

Lord Og. He, he, he!—Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee here, [Takes out his box.] a most ridiculous superfluity, but a pinch of thee now and then is a more delicious treat.

Can. You do me great honeur, mi lor.

Lord Og. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medi-

cine against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha !

Can. Your flatterie, my lor, vil make me too prode.

Lord Og. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure: but pr'ythee, *Cant.* is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Can. [Looking with a glass.] En vérité, 'tis she, my lor——'tis one of de pigeons——de pigeons d'amour.

Lord Og. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

[Smiling.]

Can. I am monkee, I am ole, but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord Og. Taisez vous bête!

Can. Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a love to you.

Lord Og. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl cann't oblige me more—Egad, I find myself a little enjoué—Come along, *Cant.*! she is but in the next walk—but there is such a deal of this damned crinkum-crankum, as *Sterling* calls it, that one fees people for half an hour before one can get to them—Allons, Mons. *Canton*, allons, donc!

[*Exeunt, singing in French.*]

Another Part of the Garden. LOVEWELL and FANNY.

Lov. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress! it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fanny. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Lov. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do any thing to recommend himself to a lady.—Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fanny. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Lov. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut-tree by the parlour-door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately.

Fanny. Dreadful as the task is, I'll do it.—Any thing is better than this continual anxiety.

Lov. By that time the discovery is made, I will appear to second you.—Ha! here comes my lord.—Now my dear Fanny, summon up all your spirits, plead our cause powerfully, and be sure of success.—

[*Going.*]

Fanny. Ah, don't leave me!

Lov. Nay, you must let me.

Fanny. Well, since it must be so, I'll obey you, if I have the power. Oh, Lovewell!

Lov. Consider, our situation is very critical. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another.—He approaches—I must retire.—Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy!

[*Exit.*

Fanny. Good Heaven! what a situation am I in! what shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter Lord Ogleby, and Canton.

Lord Og. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind, and 'tis fortunate that one man has broke in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam: for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Can. Noting at all, indeed.

Fanny. Your lordship does me great honour.—I had a favour to request, my lord!

Lord Og. A favour, madam!—To be honoured with your commands, is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fanny. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What is the matter with me?

[*Aside.*

Lord Og. The girl's confused—He!—here's something in the wind, faith—I'll have a tête-à-tête with her—Allez vous en! [To Canton.

Can. I go---Ah, pauvre Mademoiselle ! my lor,
have pitié upon the poor pigeone !

Lord Og. I'll knock you down, Cant. if you're
impertinent. [Smiling.]

Can. Den I mus away.—[*Shuffles along.*]—
You are mosh please, for all dat. [Aside, and exit.]

Fanny. I shall sink with apprehension. [Aside.]

Lord Og. What a sweet girl——she's a civilized
being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of
the family.

Fanny. My lord ! I—— [She curtsies, and Hushes.]

Lord Og. [Addressing her.] I look upon it, ma-
dam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my
life, that I have this moment the honour of receiv-
ing your commands, and the satisfaction of confirm-
ing with my tongue, what my eyes perhaps have
but too weakly expressed—that I am literally—the
humblest of your servants.

Fanny. I think myself greatly honoured by your
lordship's partiality to me ; but it distresses me,
that I am obliged in my present situation to apply
to it for protection.

Lord Og. I am happy in your distress, madam,
because it gives me an opportunity to shew my zeal.
Beauty to me is a religion in which I was born
and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr.—I'm in
tolerable spirits, faith ! [Aside.]

Fanny. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a
more distressed creature than myself. Affection,
duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sen-
timents, are struggling in my bosom ; and even the
presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for
protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord Og. Does it, madam—Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. [Aside, and smiling.] Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain.—You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you—My heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy.—By my honour, I am.

Fanny. Then I will venture to unburthen my mind—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by the most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord Og. How, madam! Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fanny. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say, that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship, [Curtseying.] made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord Og. Charming girl!—Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed!

Fanny. In a moment—give me leave, my lord!—But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

Lord Og. Impossible, by all the tender powers!—Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fanny. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as—as—

[Hesitating.]

Lord Og. As what, madam?

Fanny. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord Og. If this is not plain, the devil's in it——
[Aside.] But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where——Tell me——

Enter CANTON hastily.

Can. My lor, my lor, my lor!

Lord Og. Damn your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Can. I demande pardonne, my lor! Sir John Melvil, my lor, sent me to beg you do him de honneur to speak a little to your lordship.

Lord Og. I'm not at leisure—I am busy—Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll——

Can. Fort bien, my lor.

[Canton goes out on tiptoe.

Lord Og. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fanny. The enterance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burthen.

Lord Og. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation. [Aside.] I presume, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption) that—

Fanny. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend—

Lord Og. Upon me, madam?

Fanny. Upon you, my lord. [Sighs.]

Lord Og. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection—her tenderness dissolves me. [Sighs.]

Fanny. And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed—

Lord Og. [Taking her hand.] Thou amiable creature, command my heart for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fanny. I cannot, my lord; indeed I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me.

[Exit in tears.]

Lord Og. How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much—I can't bear it—I must give way to this amiable weakness. [Wipes his eyes.] My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. [Stifles a tear.] How blind have I been to the desolation I have made! How could I possibly imagine that a little partial attention and tender civilities to this young creature should have gathered to this burst of passion! Can I

be a man and withstand it? No—I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby House to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too! What mischief's in the wind now?

Enter Mr. STERLING, and Miss STERLING.

Sterl. My lord, your servant! I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsey.

Lord Og. Your eyes, Miss Sterling; for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss Sterl. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord!

Lord Og. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostacy. Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss. Sterl. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord Og. Nay, now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny, but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed.

[*Conceitedly.*

Miss Sterl. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord; for I have great reason to think that her seeming attachment to him, is by his consent, made use of as a blind to cover her designs upon sir John.

Lord Og. Lovewell! No, poor lad! She does not think of him. [Smiling.]

Miss Sterl. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice and my sister's dissimulation! You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious!—It is too much—She has been beforehand with me, I perceive. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that some way or other I will have revenge. [Exit.]

Sterl. This is foolish work, my lord!

Lord Og. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Sterl. It is touching, indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

Lord Og. To be sure, sir! You must be distressed beyond measure! Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

Sterl. With all my heart, my lord!

Lord Og. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Sterl. And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord Og. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Sterl. 'Tis my only wish at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord Og. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Sterl. Shall they, my lord ! but how—how ?

Lord Og. I'll marry in your family.

Sterl. What ! my sister Heidelberg ?

Lord Og. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No, not your sister ; but your daughter.

Sterl. My daughter !

Lord Og. Fanny ! now the murder's out !

Sterl. What you my lord !

Lord Og. Yes; I, I, Mr. Sterling !

Sterl. No, no, my lord ; that's too much.

[Smiling.]

Lord Og. Too much ! I don't comprehend you.

Sterl. What, you, my lord, marry my Fanny ! Bless me, what will the folks say ?

Lord Og. Why, what will they say ?

Sterl. That you're a bold man my lord ; that's all.

Lord Og. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit for aught I know. Do you court my alliance ?

Sterl. To be sure, my lord.

Lord Og. Then I'll explain—My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter; nor I neither.—Your youngest daughter won't marry him ; I will marry your youngest daughter.

Sterl. What ! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord ?

Lord Og. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the dæmon interest sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter ; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Sterl. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord Og. Her own sweet self, sir.

Sterl. Indeed?

Lord Og. Yes, sir; our affection is mutual; your advantage double and treble; your daughter will be a countess directly—I shall be the happiest of beings; and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Sterl. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

Lord Og. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Sterl. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord Og. I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos! the lawyers are in the house. I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Sterl. Very well! and I'll dispatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want, and I shall leave you to manage matters with my sister. You must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? [Exit.]

Lord Og. What a fellow am I going to make a father of? He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse—But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Enter Lovewell, hastily.

Lov. I beg your lordship's pardon, my lord; are you alone, my lord?

Lord Og. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company, the best company.

Lov. My lord!

Lord Og. I never was in such exquisite enchanting company since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted pleasure.

Lov. Where are they, my lord? [Looking about.

Lord Og. In my mind, sir.

Lov. What company have you there, my lord?

[Smiling.]

Lord Og. My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Lov. I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord Og. You shall rejoice at it, sir; my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Lov. Shall I, my lord:—then I understand you, you have heard: Miss Fanny has informed you—

Lord Og. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy; 'tis determin'd.

Lov. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord Og. O yes, poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—Fate and necessity.

Lov. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord Og. And so it did the poor girl, faith.

Lov. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

Lord Og. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Lov. [Bowing.] You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord Og. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Lov. Your generosity overpowers me. [Bowing.] I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord Og. More fool you then.

Who pleads her cause with never failing beauty,

Here finds a full redress. [Strikes his breast.] She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Lov. Her beauty, my lord, is her least merit. She has an understanding—

Lord Og. Her choice convinces me of that.

Lov. [Bowing.] That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord Og. No, no; not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Lov. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

Lord Og. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that were it

not for the cold unfeeling impediments of the law,
I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Lov. My lord !

Lord Og. I would, by all that's honourable in
man, and amiable in woman.

Lov. Marry her !—What do you mean, my
lord ?

Lord Og. Miss Fanny Sterling that is ; the Coun-
teſſ of Ogleby that shall be.

Lov. I am astonished !

Lord Og. Why, could you expect less from me ?

Lov. I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord Og. Trade and accounts have destroyed your
feeling.

Lov. No, indeed, my lord. [Sighs.]

Lord Og. The moment that love and pity entered
my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony,
and shorten the girl's tortures—I never do any thing
by halves ; do I, Lovewell ?

Lov. No, indeed, my lord. [Sighs.] What an
accident !

Lord Og. What's the matter, Lovewell ? thou
seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you
wish me joy, man ?

Lov. O, I do, my lord. [Sighs.]

Lord Og. She laid that you would explain what
she had not power to utter ; but I wanted no inter-
preter for the language of love.

Lov. But has your lordship considered the conse-
quences of your resolution ?

Lord Og. No, sir, I am above consideration,
when my desires are kindled.

Lov. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord Og. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Lov. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord Og. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Lov. But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord Og. What's that to you?—You may have her if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city-philosophy, to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought to that, without having recourse to his calculations! Eh, Lovewell?

Lov. But, my lord, that is not the question.

Lord Og. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer.—I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

What news with you, Sir John?—You look all hurry and impatience—like a messenger after a battle.

Sir John. After a battle, indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement, and wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord Og. To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing—eh, Lovewell?

[*He smiles, and Lovewell bows.*]

Sir John. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord Og. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—sha'n't I, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and Lovewell bows.*]

Sir John. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you, that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord Og. I am not at all surprised at it—she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but as you were to swallow it, and not I, it was your business, and not mine—Any thing more?

Sir John. But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord Og. O yes; by all means—have you any hopes there, nephew?—Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell? [*Smiles, and winks at Lovewell.*]

Lov. I think not, my lord. [Gravely.]

Lord Og. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir John. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord Og. Mrs. Heidelberg?—Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble: won't it, Lovewell? [*Smiles.*] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me: won't it, Lovewell? [*Conceitedly.*] Why don't you laugh at him?

Lov. I do, my lord. [Forces a smile.]

Sir John. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord Og. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir John. Your generosity transports me.

Lord Og. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town. [Aside.]

Sir John. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord Og. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *seræ naturæ*—lawful game—and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them;—Lovewell as well as you, and I as well as either of you.—Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir John. You have made me happy, my lord.

Lov. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord Og. And I am superlatively so—*allons donc!*—to horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—*suivons l'amour.* [Sings.]

[Exeunt severally.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

FANNY's Apartment. Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY,
followed by BETTY.

Fanny.

WHY did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Betty. My mistress is right, Sir! evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Lov. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Betty. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fanny. I do expect the worst.—Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear any body in the gallery; and let us know directly.

Betty. I warrant you, madam—the lord bles^s you both!

[Exit.]

Fanny. What did my father want with you this evening?

Lov. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fanny. And why did you not obey him?

Lov. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account—but as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fanny. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble!—I feel the terrors of guilt—indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me.

Lov. And for me too, my sweet Fanny. Your apprehensions make a coward of me.—But what can alarm you? your aunt and sister are in their chambers, and you have nothing to fear from the rest of the family.

Fanny. I fear every body, and every thing, and every moment—My mind is in continual agitation and dread; indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [Weeps.]

Lov. But it sha'n't—I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risque of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity.—What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean, and in such case, the meanest consideration—of our fortune!—Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fanny. Hush! hush! for Heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence! you will be heard, and we shall be discovered.—I am satisfied—indeed I am—Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this

Lov. what you will.—My mind's at peace—indeed it is—think no more of it, if you love me !

Lov. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience ; it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment.

[Kisses her.]

Re-enter BETTY.

Betty. [In a low voice.] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fanny. Ha ! what's the matter ?

Lov. Have you heard any body ?

Betty. Yes, yes, I have ; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken—if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary !

Fanny. Pr'ythee, don't prate now, Betty !

Lov. What did you hear ?

Betty. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap——

Lov. A nap !

Betty. Yes, sir, a nap ; for I watch much better so than wide awake ; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the earach from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of a buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fanny. Well—well—and so——

Betty. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too —and pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise——

[Makes an indistinct sort of noise like speaking.]

Fanny. Well, and what did they say?

Betty. O! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Lov. The outward door is lock'd?

Betty. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

Fanny. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Betty. And I did it on purpose, madam, and cough'd a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice—when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fanny. What shall we do?

Lov. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon—but Betty might fancy this noise—she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Betty. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters—I'm sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fanny. He compliments you, don't be a fool!—Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. [To Lovewell.] I'll go and hearken myself.

[Exit.]

Betty. I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service. [Half aside and muttering.]

Lov. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, Betty, for one and the other.

Betty. I am not mercenary neither—I can live on a little, with a good carreter.

Re-enter FANNY.

Fanny. All seems quiet—suppose, my dear, you go to your own room—I shall be much easier then—and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Betty. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret.

[*Half aside and muttering.*

Lov. Should I leave you now, if they still are upon the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Betty. Shall I, madam?

Fanny. Do! let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after. I would not have you surprised here for the world. Pray leave me! I shall be quite myself again, if you will oblige me.

Lov. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. [*Going.*

Fanny. Let us listen first at the door, that you may not be intercepted. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her——

Betty. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. [*Going hastily.*

Fanny. Softly—softly—Betty! don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you! See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Lov. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

[*Exeunt all softly.*

SCENE II.

Changes to a Gallery, which leads to several Bed-chambers. Enter Miss STERLING, leading Mrs. HEIDELBERG in a Night-cap.

Miss Sterl. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. Heidel. Nay, but niece—consider a little—don't drag me out in this figure; let me put on my fly-cap!—if any of my lord's fammaly, or the counsellors at law, should be stirring, I should be perdigus disconcerted.

Miss Sterl. But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, but softly, Betsey!—you are all in emotion—your mind is too much flustrated—you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natural rest—compose yourself, child; for if we are not as warysome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole fammaly.

Miss Sterl. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if any body, it is my sister; my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker; so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had

better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister, the will of the best of aunts, and the weakness of a too interested father.

[*She pretends to be bursting into tears all this speech.*

Mrs. Heidel. Don't, Betsey—keep up your spirit—I hate whimpering—I am your friend—depend upon me in every particular—but be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered?

Miss Sterl. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart:—I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me that they were in high consultation; that she had heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conduct Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. Heidel. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss Sterl. I returned with her, and could hear a man's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. Heidel. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband (that is to be) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too!—I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss Sterl. Hush, madam ! I hear something.

Mrs. Heidel. You frighten me—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figure for the world.

Miss Sterl. 'Tis dark, madam ; you can't be seen.

Mrs. Heidel. I perceive there's a candle coming, and a man too !

Miss Sterl. Nothing but servants ; let us retire a moment !

[They retire.]

Enter BRUSH, *half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a Candle in her Hand.*

Cham. Be quiet, Mr. Brush ; I shall drop down with terror !

Brush. But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason ! that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too : pray let me go ; I am ruined if they hear you ; I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they sha'n't hear us ; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you ! therefore I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason !

Cham. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner ; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by Heavens, but your frowns, most amiable chamber-maid ; I am a little electri-

fied, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink Port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it oversets a claret-drinker.

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me!—I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable.

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out, if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. And that my Lord Ogleby's, and that my Lady What-d'ye-call-'em; I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush!—you terrify me—you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher!—for instance; I reverence Miss Fanny—she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince.—With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself—but for her fister—

Miss Sterl. There, there, madam, all in a story!

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something!

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon—if it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two damn'd things at once.

Cham. Law! law! how you blaspheme!—we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time—but as I was saying, the eldest sister—Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No—we have smoked her already; and unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us—no, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. Heidel. [Coming forward.] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous. [Runs off.]

Miss Sterl. A fine discourse you have had with that fellow!

Mrs. Heidel. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss Sterl. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. I can say nothing.—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed—but indeed I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, well—don't tremble so; but, tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss Sterl. We'll forgive you, if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, madam—don't let me betray my fellow servants—I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. Heidel. Then you shall sleep some where else to-morrow night.

Cham. O dear! what shall I do!

Mrs. Heidel. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry—Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of a holiday night of it.

Miss Sterl. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss Sterl. Well, well; but upon what account?

Cham. Because, as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss Sterl. And so you make a holiday for that—Very fine!

Cham. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No, indeed, ma'am!

Miss Sterl. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

Mrs. Heidel. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly—do you run to my brother Sterling— —

Cham. Now, ma'am!—'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. Heidel. I don't care how late it is. Tell

him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately—go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will, though I'm frighten'd out of my wits. [Exit.]

Mrs. Heidel. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order, to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counter-plot 'em too.

[Exit into her chamber.]

Miss Sterl. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess.—Ha! they are unlocking the door.—Now for it! [Retires.]

FANNY's Door is unlock'd, and BETTY comes out with a candle. *Miss STERLING approaches her.*

Betty. [Calling within.] Sir! sir!—now's your time—all's clear. [Seeing *Miss Sterl.*] Stay, stay—not yet—we are watch'd.

Miss Sterl. And so you are, Madam Betty. [*Miss Sterl.* lays hold of her, while *Betty locks the door, and puts the key in her pocket.*]

Betty. [Turning round.] What's the matter, madam?

Miss Sterl. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Betty. I am no tell-tale, madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me.

Miss Sterl. You have a great deal of courage, Betty; and considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Betty. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter Mr. STERLING.

Sterl. What's all this? what's the matter? Why am I disturb'd in this manner?

Miss Sterl. This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain the matter.

Re-enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG, with another head-dress.

Mrs. Heidel. Now I'm prepar'd for the rancounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Sterl. Not I—but what is it? speak.—I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my sences in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak: and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. Heidel. No, no, there's no rape, brother!—all parties are willing, I believe.

Miss Sterl. Who's in that chamber?

[*Detaining Betty, who seemed to be stealing away.*

Betty. My mistress.

Miss Sterl. And who's with your mistress?

Betty. Why, who should there be?

Miss Sterl. Open the door then, and let us see.

Betty. The door is open, madam, [*Miss Sterl. goes to the door.*] I'll sooner die than peach.

[*Exit hastily.*

Miss Sterl. The door is lock'd; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. Heidel. There's impudence, brother ! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school !

Sterl. But, zounds ! what is all this about ! You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. Heidel. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber—There is the particular.

Sterl. The devil he is!—That's bad.

Miss Sterl. And he has been there some time too.

Sterl. Ditto !

Mrs. Heidel. Ditto ! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Sterl. By no means ! we shall expose ourselves, sister!—the best way is to insure privately—let me alone ! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss Sterl. Make him marry her ! this is beyond all patience !—You have thrown away all your affection ; and I shall do as much by my obedience ; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it.—Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world : but the deriders shall be derided ; and so—help ! help, there ! thieves ! thieves !

Mrs. Heidel. Tit-for-tat, Betsey ! you are right, my girl.

Sterl. Zounds ! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl.

Mrs. Heidel. No, no ; the devil's in you, brother ; I am ashamed of your principles.—What ! would

you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! thieves! thieves, I say.

[*Cries out.*]

Sterl. Sister, I beg you!—daughter, I command you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves!—we shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty *per cent.* for our money.

Miss Sterl. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph! I have a spirit above such mean considerations; and to shew you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar 'Change-alley spirit—help! help! thieves! thieves! I say!

Sterl. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs—the house is in an uproar; women at best have no discretion; but in a passion they'll fire a house, or burn themselves in it, rather than not be revenged.

Enter CANTON, in a night-gown and slippers.

Can. Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tantamarre?

Sterl. Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord Og. [*Calls within.*] Brush! Brush!—Canton! where are you?—What's the matter? [*Rings a bell.*] Where are you?

Sterl. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. I com, my lor!— [*Exit Canton.*]

[*Lord Ogleby still rings.*]

Serj. Flaw. [*Calls within.*] A light! a light here!—where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Sterl. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

[*Exit Sterling,*]

Mrs. Heidel. My brother feels, I see—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss Sterl. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING, with lights, before Serjeant FLOW-ER, with one boot and a slipper, and TRAVERSE.

Sterl. This way, sir! this way, gentlemen!

Flow. Well; but Mr. Sterling, no danger I hope. Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit-time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Trav. No danger, Mr. Sterling,—no trespass, I hope?

Sterl. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies making.

Mrs. Heidel. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but, why were we to be frighten'd out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss Sterl. But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter Lord Ogleby, in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on CANTON.

Lord Og. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Sterl. Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord too.

Lord Og. What's all this shrieking and screaming? Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope?

Mrs. Heidel. Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is lock'd up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

Lord Og. My nephew! then will I be excommunicated.

Mrs. Heidel. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with the younger sister; and the younger sister has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them and call'd up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord Og. Look'e, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know too that Miss Fanny has conceived a violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, shan't I, Mr. Sterling? [Smiling.] what say you?

Sterl. [Sulkily.] To be sure, my lord.—These bawling women have been the ruin of every thing.

[*Afide.*]

Lord Og. But come, I'll end this busineſſ in a trice—if you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and

Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. Heidel. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord Og. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate. Now to our experiment!

[*Advancing towards the door.*

Miss Sterl. Now, what will they do?—my heart will beat through my bosom.

Enter BETTY with the key.

Betty. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies.

[*Going to unlock the door.*

Mrs. Heidel. There's impudence.

Lord Og. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bed-chamber, [To Betty.] open the door, and in-treat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors.—Call Sir John Melvil into the court!

Enter SIR JOHN MELVIL, on the other side.

Sir John. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. Heidel. Hey-day!

Miss Sterl. Aftonishment!

Sir John. What's all this alarm and confusion? there is nothing but hurry in the house; what is the reason of it?

Lord Og. Because you have been in that chamber; have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it—

Trav. This is the clearest alibi I ever knew,
Mr. Serjeant.

Flow. *Luce clarius.*

Lord Og. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But come [*To Betty.*] open the door, and intreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Betty. [*Opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

Enter FANNY, in great confusion.

Miss Sterl. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in!

Mrs. Heidel. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! her guilt confounds her!

Flow. Silence in the court, ladies!

Fanny. I am confounded, indeed, madam!

Lord Og. Don't droop, my beauteous lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind.—Pour conviction into their ears and raptures into mine. [*Smiling.*]

Fanny. I am at this moment the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which to conceal has been the misfortune and misery of my— [*Faints away.*]

Lord Og. She faints ; help, help ! for the fairest and best of women !

Betty. [Running to her.] O, my dear mistress!—help, help, there !—

Sir John. Ha ! let me fly to her assistance.

Lovewell rushes out of the Chamber.

Lov. My Fanny in danger ! I can contain no longer.—Prudence were now a crime; all other cares were lost in this!—speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny !—let me but hear thy voice, open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life !

[During this speech they are all in amazement.

Miss Sterl. Lovewell !—I am easy.——

Mrs. Heidel. I am thunderstruck !

Lord Og. I am petrified !

Sir John. And I undone !

Fanny. [Recovering.] O, Lovewell !—even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Sterl. What now ! did not I send you to London, sir ?

Lord Og. Eh !—What ! How's this ! by what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber ?

Lov. By that right which makes me the happiest of men ; and by a title which I would not forgo, for any the best of kings could give.

Betty. I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnimity.

Lord Og. I am annihilated !

Sterl. I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Zounds, what have you to say to me? Lovewell, you are a villain.—You have broke your word with me.

Fanny. Indeed, sir, he has not—you forbad him to think of me when it was out of his power to obey you; we have been married these four months.

Sterl. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam.

Fanny. Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Sterl. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly; and you shall follow him, madam.

Lord Og. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Look ye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them is to forgive the cause of them; which I do from my soul.—Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; 'tis a debt of honour, and must be paid—you swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without errors excepted.

Sterl. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of all other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls like herself

to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Lov. I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. Heidel. Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicate word to express obedience!

Lord Og. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls, I pity them. And you must forgive them too. Come, come, melt a little of your flint, Mr. Sterling!

Sterl. Why, why, as to that, my lord—to be sure he is a relation of yours, my lord—what say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. Heidel. The girl's ruin'd, and I forgive her.

Sterl. Well—so do I then.—Nay, no thanks—
[To Lovewell and Fanny, who seem preparing to speak.] there's an end of the matter.

Lord Og. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Lov. Your kindness, my lord—I can scarce believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude; I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship. For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will in some measure compensate the want of fortune, you perhaps will not repent your goodness to me. And

you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not for the future suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you.—As for you, Sir John—

Sir John. No apologies to me, Lovewell, I do not deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, and yourself, and that lady, (who, I hope, will pardon my behaviour) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Lov. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are seemingly the happiest of beings, yet all our joys will be dampt, if his lordship's generosity, and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness, should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors. [To the audience.]

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

CHARACTERS OF THE EPILOGUE.

<i>Lord Minum,</i>	- - -	-	Mr. Dodd.
<i>Colonel Trill,</i>	- - -	-	Mr. Vernon.
<i>Sir Patrick Mahony,</i>	- - -	-	Mr. Moody.
<i>Miss Crotchet,</i>	- - -	-	Mrs. ——
<i>Mrs. Quaver,</i>	- - -	-	Mrs. Lee.
<i>First Lady,</i>	- - -	-	Mrs. Bradshaw.
<i>Second Lady,</i>	- - -	-	Miss Mills.
<i>Third Lady,</i>	- - -	-	Mrs. Dorman.

SCENE, an Assembly.

*Several Persons at Cards, at different Tables; among the rest,
Colonel TRILL, Lord MINUM, Mrs. QUAKER, Sir PA-
TRICK MAHONY.*

At the Quadrille Table.

Colonel Trill.

LAIES, with leave—

2d Lady. Pass!

3d Lady. Pass!

Mrs. Qu. You must do more.

Col. T. Indeed I can't.

Mrs. Qu. I play in Hearts.

Col. T. Encore!

2d Lady. What luck !

Col. T. To-night at Drury-Lane is play'd
A Comedy, and *tour nouvelle*—a Spade !
Is not Miss Crotchet at the play ?

Mrs. Qu. My niece
Has made a party, sir, to damn the piece.

At the Whist Table.

Ld. Min. I hate a playhouse—Trump—It makes me sick,
1st Lady. We're two by Honours, ma'am.

Ld. Min. And we th' odd trick.

Pray, do you know the author, Colonel Trill ?

Col. T. I know no poets, Heaven be prais'd—Spadille—

1st Lady. I'll tell you who, my lord. [Whispers *Ld. Min.*]

Ld. Min. What, he again !

'And dwell such daring souls in little men ?'

Be whose it will, they down our throats will cram it.

Col. T. O, no—I have a Club—the best—We'll damn it.

Mrs. Qu. O, bravo, colonel!—Music is my flame.

Ld. Min. And mine, by Jupiter!—We've won the game.

Col. T. What, do you love all music ?

Mrs. Qu. No, not Handel's.

And nasty plays—

Ld. Min. Are fit for Goths and Vandals.

[Rise from the table and pay.

From the Piquette Table.

Sir Pat. Well, faith and troth, that Shakspere was no fool !

Col. T. I'm glad you like him, sir—so ends the Pool.

[They pay, and rise from the table.

SONG, by the Colonel.

I hate all their nonsense,

Their Shakspere's and Johnson's,

Their plays, and their playhouse, and bards :

'Tis singing, not saying ;

A fig for all playing,

But playing as we do, at cards.

I love to see Jonas,
 Am pleas'd too with Comus ;
 Each well the spectator rewards.
 So clever, so neat in
 Their tricks and their cheating !
 Like them, we would fain deal our cards.

Sir Pat. King Lare is touching !—And how fine to see
 Ould Hamlet's Ghost !—‘ To be, or not to be.’—
 What are your Op'ras to Othello's roar ?
 Oh, he's an angel of a Blackamoor !

Ld. Min. What, when he choaks his wife !—

Col. T. And calls her whore ?

Sir Pat. King Richard calls his horse—And then Macbeth,
 Whene'er he murders—takes away the breath.
 My blood runs cold at every syllable,
 To see the dagger that's invisible. [All laugh.]
 Laugh if you please—a pretty play—

Ld. Min. Is pretty.

Sir Pat. And when there's wit in't—

Col. T. To be sure 'tis witty.

Sir Pat. I love the playhouse now—so light and gay,
 With all those candles—they have ta'en away !

[All laugh.]

For all your game, what makes it so much brighter ?

Col. T. Put out the lights, and then—

Ld. Min. 'Tis so much lighter.

Sir Pat. Pray, do you mane, sirs, more than you express ?

Col. T. Just as it happens—

Ld. Min. Either more or less.

Mrs. Qu. An't you ashamed, sir ? [To *Sir Pat.*]

Sir Pat. Me !—I seldom blush :—

For little Shakspere, faith, I'd take a push. [play.]

Ld. Min. News, news !—Here comes Miss Crotchet from the

Enter Miss CROTCHET.

Mrs. Qu. Well, Crotchet, what's the news ?

Miss Cro. We've lost the day.

F

Col. T. Tell us, dear miss, all you have heard and seen.

Miss Cro. I'm tired—a chair—here, take my capuchin.

Ld. Min. And is'nt it damn'd, miss?

Miss Cro. No, my lord, not quite.

But we shall damn it.

Col. T. When?

Miss Cro. To-morrow-night.

There is a party of us, all of fashion,

Resolved to exterminate this vulgar passion :

A playhouse! what a place!—I must forswear it:

A little mischief only makes one bear it.

Such crowds of city folks!—so rude and pressing!

And their horse laughs, so hideously distressing!

Whene'er we his'd, they frown'd, and fell a swearing,

Like their own Guildhall giants—fierce and staring!

Col. T. What said the folks of fashion; were they cross?

Ld. Min. The rest have no more judgment than my horse.

Miss Cro. Lord Grimly said, 'twas execrable stuff.

Says one—Why so, my lord?—My lord took snuff.

In the first act Lord George began to doze,

And criticis'd the author thro' his nose;

So loud indeed, that as his lordship snor'd,

The pit turn'd round, and all the brutes encor'd.

Some lords, indeed, approv'd the author's jokes.

Ld. Min. We have among us, miss, some foolish folks.

Miss Cro. Says poor Lord Simper—Well, now to my mind,

The piece is good;—but he's both deaf and blind.

Sir Pat. Upon my soul, a very pretty story!

And quality appears in all its glory.

There was some merit in the piece, no doubt:

Miss Cro. O, to be sure!—if one could find it out.

Col. T. But tell us, miss, the subject of the play.

Miss Cro. Why, 'twas a marriage—yes—a marriage—stay—

A lord, an aunt, two sisters, and a merchant—

A baronet, ten lawyers, a fat serjeant,

Are all produc'd—to talk with one another;

And about something make a mighty pothe!

They all go in and out, and to and fro ;
 And talk and quarrel—as they come and go—
 Then go to bed—and then get up—and then—
 Scream, faint, scold, kiss—and go to bed again.—

[All laugh.]

Such is the play—Your judgment—never sham it :—

Col. T. Oh, damn it !

Mrs. Qu. Damn it !

1st Lady. Damn it !

Miss Cro. Damn it.

Ld. Min. Damn it !

Sir Pat. Well, faith, you speak your minds, and I'll be free—
 Good night—this company's too good for me. [Going.]

Col. T. Your judgment, dear Sir Patrick, makes us proud.

[All laugh.]

Sir Pat. Laugh, if you please, but, pray, don't laugh so loud.

[Exit.]

RECITATIVE.

Col. T. Now the barbarian's gone, miss, tune your tongue ;
 And let us raise our spirits high with song.

RECITATIVE.

Miss Cro. Colonel, *de tout mon cœur*—I've one in *petto*,
 Which you shall join, and make it a *duetto*.

RECITATIVE.

Ld. Min. Bella Signora, et amico mio,
 I too will join, and then we'll make a *trio*.
Col. T. Come all and join the full-mouth'd chorus ;
 And drive all tragedy and comedy before us.

All the Company rise, and advance to the front of the Stage.

AIR.

Col. T. Would you ever go to see a tragedy ?

Mis Cro. Never, never;

Col. T. A comedy ?

Ld. Min. Never, never.

Live for ever !

Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

Col. T. Ld. Min. and Mis Cro. Live for ever.

Tweedle-dum, and tweedle-dee.

CHORUS.

Would you ever go to see, &c.



